

The Platonist.

"Platonism is immortal because its principles are immortal in the human intellect and heart."

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THE PLATONIST.

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EDITED BY THOS. M. JOHNSON.

*The Platonist is devoted chiefly to the dissemination of the
Platonic Philosophy in all its phases.*

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In this degenerated age, when the senses are apotheosized, materialism absurdly considered philosophy, folly and ignorance popularized, and the dictum, "Get money, eat, drink, and be merry, for to-morrow we die," exemplifies the actions of millions of mankind, there certainly is a necessity for a journal which shall be a candid, bold, and fearless exponent of the Platonic Philosophy—a philosophy totally subversive of sensualism, materialism, folly, and ignorance. This philosophy recognizes the essential immortality and divinity of the human soul, and posits its highest happiness as an approximation to, and union with, the Absolute One. Its mission is to release the soul from the bonds of matter, to lead it to the vision of true being,—from images to realities,—and, in short, to elevate it from a sensible to an intellectual life.

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Osceola, St. Clair County, Mo.

Through a very annoying blunder chapter I. of Iamblichos on the Mysteries was omitted from our last number. It appears in this issue.

We have reason to believe that there are still in existence, both in England and this country, many manuscript works of Thomas Taylor, the Platonist. Do any of our readers know where these precious manuscripts are?

The next number of THE PLATONIST will be a triple one—for the months of June, July, and August—and will be published in August. It will contain forty-eight pages.

We trust that every one who is interested in the dissemination of philosophical ideas will constitute himself, or herself, a committee to extend the circulation and subscription list of THE PLATONIST.

Mr. W. H. Steele is preparing for THE PLATONIST a revision and modernization of Ockley's version of Tophail's Life of Hai Ebn Yokdan. This is a very remarkable philosophical work by a noted Arabian thinker. "It is an exposition of the gradual development of the capacities of man to the point where his intellect becomes one with the Divine."

PEARLS OF WISDOM.

[GATHERED FROM PLATONIC SOURCES.]

He who is perfectly vanquished by riches can never be just.

Reason is frequently more persuasive than gold itself.

Unreasonable pleasures bring forth pain.

To desire immoderately is the province of a boy, and not of a man.

Vehement desires about any one thing render the soul blind with respect to other things.

A worthy and an unworthy man are to be judged, not from their actions only, but also from their will.

It is not indeed useless to procure wealth, but to procure it from injustice is the most pernicious of all things.

It is a shameful thing for a man to be employed about the affairs of others, but to be ignorant of his own.

The Divinity has not a place in the earth more allied to his nature than a pure and holy soul.

He who believes that Divinity beholds all things will not sin, either secretly or openly.

For the most complete injustice is—to seem just when not so.

Ignorance must be referred to that which has no true being, and knowledge to real existence.

Put not confidence in all men, but in those that are worthy; for to do the former is the province of a stupid man, but the latter of a wise man.

Think you, then, that he who possesses magnificent intellectual conceptions, and can contemplate all time and all being, can possibly consider human life as a thing of great consequence? It is impossible.

The lovers of common stories and spectacles delight in fine sounds, colors, and figures, and everything made up of these; but the nature of beauty itself their intellect is unable to discern and admire.

The man is a fool who deems anything ridiculous except what is bad, and tries to stigmatize as ridiculous any other idea but

that of the foolish and the vicious, or employs himself seriously with any other end in view but that of the good.

Do you think it a marvellous thing that a person who has just quitted the contemplation of divine objects for the study of human infirmities should betray awkwardness and appear very ridiculous when, with his sight still dazed, and before he has become sufficiently habituated to the darkness that reigns around, he finds himself compelled to contend in courts of law, or elsewhere, about the shadows of justice, or images which throw the shadows, and to enter the lists in questions involving the arbitrary suppositions entertained by those who have never yet had a glimpse of justice itself? No, it is anything but marvellous.

May we not affirm that a soul is crippled with reference to truth if, while it hates voluntary falsehood, and cannot endure it in itself, and is exceedingly indignant when other people are guilty of an untruth, it nevertheless calmly accepts involuntary falsehood, and, instead of being distressed when its lack of knowledge is detected, is fain to wallow in ignorance with the complacency of a brutal hog? Doubtless.

Therefore, when people have an eye for a multitude of beautiful objects, but can neither see Beauty in itself, nor follow those who would lead them to it; when they behold a number of just things, but not Justice in itself, and so in every instance, we shall say they have in every case an opinion, but no real knowledge of the things about which they opine.

THE BEST TRANSLATION OF PLATON.

We have had many inquiries concerning the best English version of the writings of Platon. It is a very difficult question to answer. A translation that is good in some respects may be deficient in others. That which one who has a slight knowledge of the Greek finds serviceable, a finished scholar rejects as inadequate. The chief object of a translation of an ancient writer, however, is to make his thoughts accessible to those who are entirely ignorant of the classical languages. Of course, all translations are more or less imperfect. No version can perfectly convey the spirit of a Greek philosophic author, and especially of one so subtle and recondite as Platon. Nevertheless, a good translation, that which is a true rendition of an author's ideas, is practically equivalent to its original.

The following are the English translations of Platon that have appeared: 1. "The Works of Platon, in which the substance is given of nearly all the existing Greek Manuscripts, Commentaries and Scholia on Plato, and his most abstruse Dogmas are unfolded." By Thomas Taylor. (Nine of the Dialogues were translated by Floyer Sydenham and revised by Taylor.) 5 vols. 4to. London, 1804. 2. "The Platonic Dialogues for English Readers." By Dr. William Whewell. 3 vols. 8vo. London, 1859-61. 3. Bohn's Edition. 6 vols. 8vo. London. 1848-54. By various scholars. 4. "The Works of Plato, with Analyses and Introductions." By Prof. B. Jowett. 4 vols. 8vo. Oxford, 1871, etc. Taylor's version, take it all in all, is undoubtedly the best. It is marred by some inaccuracies, and inelegancies of language, but in the main it is a faithful translation and reproduction of the ideas of the prince of philosophers. If other scholars knew more Greek, Taylor emphatically knew more Platon. He had a profounder knowledge of the Platonic Philosophy than any other man of modern times. His work is now out of print and commands a high price. A revision and republication of it, in moderate size volumes, would be an act appreciated by all those who read or expect to read Platon. Dr. Whewell's

version is not complete. Only parts of the Dialogues are translated, and these are avowedly paraphrased. However, the Doctor's work, as far as it goes, has considerable merit. The Bohn edition is useful in many respects, though, critically viewed, it is of no particular value. It is noteworthy that, though the translators accuse Taylor of having frequently misinterpreted the Greek, they often adopt *verbatim* his renderings, without acknowledgment. Moreover, portions of this translation betray proofs of haste and carelessness in its execution. Prof. Jowett has given us a tolerably good version, in smooth, elegant English; somewhat disfigured, however, by too many colloquialisms. Again, he frequently fails to apprehend the esoteric meaning of the Platonic text, and is too fond of *trying* to refute his author. Sir Philip Sydney said: "I had rather try to understand Plato than waste my time in vain efforts to refute him." These golden words should be constantly present to every translator of the Grecian sage. It may be added that the thorough comprehension of an author must precede the refutation of him. What is not understood cannot be refuted. There are also good versions of some of the separate works of Platon. Some of these are excellent, and may be profitably read and studied. Among them are the Menon and Sophistes, by Mackay; the Phaidros, by Wright; and the Philebos, by Post. In conclusion, we say to the student of Platon: Get Taylor's translation, if possible. Otherwise, get Bohn's, Whewell's, or Jowett's.

ON THE UTILITY OF THE MATHEMATICAL AND METAPHYSICAL SCIENCES.

BY THOMAS TAYLOR.

[Reprinted from the Introduction to his Treatise on Theoretic Arithmetic.]

[Concluded.]

Some, however, endeavor to subvert the dignity of the mathematical science by depriving it of beauty and good because it does not make these the subjects of discussion, and others by endeavoring to evince that sensible experiments are more useful than the universal objects of its speculation, as, for instance, geodesia than geometry, vulgar arithmetic than that which consists in theorems, and nautical astronomy than that which demonstrates universally. For, say they, we are not made rich by any knowledge of riches, but by the use of them; nor do we become happy by a knowledge of felicity, but by living happily. Hence, we must confess that not speculative, but practical mathematics contribute to human life and actions. For those who are ignorant of the reasons of things, but are experienced in particulars, excel in every respect, in what is useful to human life, those who are engaged in theory alone.

Against objections, then, of this kind, we shall reply by showing the beauty of the mathematical disciplines from those arguments by which Aristoteles endeavors to persuade us. For these three things are in a remarkable degree effective of beauty, in bodies and souls, viz., order, symmetry, and the definite. Since corporeal deformity, indeed, arises from material irregularity, privation of form, and the dominion of the indefinite in the composite body. But the baseness of the soul originates from its irrational part being moved in a confused and disorderly manner, and from its being discordant with reason, and not receiving from thence its proper limitation. Hence beauty has its essence in the contraries to these, viz., in order, symmetry, and that which is definite. These, however, we may survey in the most eminent degree in the mathematical science; order, indeed, in the

perpetual exhibition of things posterior and more various from such as are first and more simple. For things subsequent are always suspended from those that precede them; the former having the relation of a principle, but the latter of things consequent to the first hypothesis. But we may perceive symmetry in the concord of the things demonstrated with each other, and the reference of all of them to intellect. For intellect is the measure of all science, from which it receives its principles, and to which it converts the learners. And the definite is seen in the perpetually stable and immutable objects of its theory. For the subjects of its knowledge do not subsist differently at different times, like the objects of opinion and sense, but they present themselves to the view invariably the same, and are bounded by intellectual forms. If, therefore, these particulars are in an eminent degree effective of beauty, but the mathematical sciences are characterized by these, it is manifest that in these the beautiful subsists. Indeed, how is it possible this should not be the case with a science which is supernally illustrated by intellect, to which it tends, and to which it hastens to transfer us from the obscure informations of sense?

But we ought to judge of its utility, not looking to the conveniences and necessities of human life. For thus also we must acknowledge that contemplative virtue itself is useless; since this separates itself from human concerns, to which it does not tend, nor is, in short, desirous of making these the objects of its knowledge. For Sokrates, in the *Theaitetos*, speaking of the Coryphæan philosophers, or those that philosophize in the most eminent degree, says that through intellectual energy they are separated from all habitude to human life, and from an attention to its necessities and wants, and that they extend the reasoning power of the soul without impediment to the contemplation of real beings. The mathematical science, therefore, must be considered as desirable for its own sake, and for the contemplation it affords, and not on account of the utility it administers to human concerns. If, however, it be requisite to refer its utility to something else, it must be referred to intellectual knowledge. For it leads us to this, and prepares the eye of the soul for the knowledge of incorporeal wholes, purifying it, and removing the impediments arising from sensible objects. As therefore we do not say that the whole of cathartic or purifying virtue is useful, or the contrary, looking to the utility of the sensible life, but regarding the advantage of a contemplative life; thus also it is fit to refer the end of the mathematical science to intellect and the whole of wisdom. Hence, the energy about it deserves our most serious attention, both on its own account and on account of an intellectual life. It is also manifest, as Aristoteles says, that this science is desirable of itself to its votaries, because, though no reward was proposed to its investigators, yet in a short time the mathematical theory has received such an abundant increase. Besides, all men who have in the smallest degree experienced its utility are willingly employed in its pursuit, and are desirous of being at leisure for this purpose, omitting every other concern. Hence those who despise the knowledge of the mathematics have not tasted of the pleasures they contain. The mathematical science, therefore, is not to be despised because its theoretic part does not contribute to human utility; for its ultimate progressions, and such as energize in conjunction with matter, consider as their end an advantage of this kind; but, on the contrary, we should admire its immateriality, and the good which it contains in itself alone. For, in short, when men were entirely disengaged from the care of necessary concerns, they converted themselves to the investigation of the mathematical disciplines; and this, indeed, with the greatest propriety. For things by which we are nourished, and which are connascent with sensible objects, first employed the attention of mankind; but afterwards

those concerns which liberate the soul from a life of sense and produce its recollection of real beings. After this manner, therefore, we are engaged in the pursuit of necessities prior to that of things honorable on their own account, and of things connascent with sense prior to such as are apprehended by intellectual energy. For the life of the human soul is naturally adapted to proceed from the imperfect to perfection. And thus much in answer to those who despise the mathematical science.

Again, with respect to the name mathematics, it appears to me, says Proklos, that such an appellation of the science which is conversant with the objects of the reasoning power was not, like many names, invented by casual persons, but, as it is also said to have been, by the Pythagoreans. For they perceived that the whole of what is called mathesis is reminiscence not externally inserted in souls, in the same manner as phantasms from sensible objects are impressed in the imagination, nor adventitious like the knowledge resulting from opinion, but excited indeed from things apparent, and inwardly exerted from the reasoning power converted to itself. They likewise saw that, though reminiscence might be shown from many particulars, yet it was evinced in a most eminent manner, as Platon also says, from the mathematical disciplines. For if any one, says he, is led to the diagrams he will from them easily prove that discipline is reminiscence. Hence, also, Sokrates, in the *Menon*, shows from this mode of arguing that to learn is nothing else than for the soul to recollect the productive principles which she contains. But this is because that which recollects is the discursive energy of reason, which is essentialized in the principles of the mathematics, and which causally comprehends the mathematical sciences in itself, though it may not energize according to them. It contains, therefore, all of them essentially and occultly; but it unfolds each of them into light when it is freed from the impediments originating from sense. For the senses connect the soul with divisible objects, imaginations fill her with figured motions, and appetites draw her down to a passive life. But everything divisible is an impediment to our conversion to ourselves, everything figured obscures that knowledge which is unaccompanied with figure, and everything passive is an obstacle to impassive energy. When, therefore, we have removed all these from the discursive power of reason, then we shall be able to know by it the productive principles which it contains—then we shall become scientific in energy, and exert our essential knowledge. But while we are bound, and have the eye of the soul closed, we shall never obtain the perfection adapted to our nature. Mathesis, therefore, is the reminiscence of the eternal productive principles inherent in the soul; and the mathematical science is on this account the knowledge which contributes to our recollection of these principles. Hence the employment of this science is evident from its name. For it is motive of knowledge, excites intelligence, purifies the discursive energy of reason, unfolds the forms which we essentially contain, removes the oblivion and ignorance which we derive from the regions of sense, and dissolves the bonds through which we are held in captivity by the irrational nature.

The subserviency, also, of mathematics to philosophy is elegantly illustrated by Theon of Smyrna, who compares the tradition of it to initiation into the mysteries, and shows that these disciplines correspond to the purification previously necessary to this initiation. But what he says on this subject is as follows: "Again, it may be said that philosophy is the initiation into, and tradition of, real and true mysteries. But of initiation there are five parts. That which has the precedence indeed, and is the first, is purification. For the mysteries are not imparted to all that are willing to be initiated, but some persons are excluded by the voice of the crier, such as those whose hands are

not pure, and whose speech is inarticulate. It is also necessary that those who are not excluded from initiation should first undergo a certain purification. But the second thing after purification is the tradition of the mystery. The third thing is denominated *εποπτεία*, or inspection.¹ And the fourth, which is the end of inspection, is binding the head, and placing on it crowns; so that he who is initiated is now able to deliver to others the mysteries which he has received, whether it be the mystery of a torch-bearer, or of the interpretation of the sacred ceremonies, or of some other priesthood. But the fifth thing which results from these is the felicity arising from being dear to divinity and the associate of the gods. Conformably to these things, likewise, is the tradition of political doctrines. And in the first place a certain purification is requisite, such as that of the exercise from youth in appropriate disciplines. For Empedokles says, "It is necessary to be purified from defilement by drawing from five fountains in a vessel of unmingled brass." But Platon says that purification is to be derived from five disciplines, viz., arithmetic, geometry, stereometry, music, and astronomy. The tradition, however, of philosophical, logical, political, and physical theories is similar to initiation. But Platon denominates the occupation about intelligibles, true beings, and ideas *εποπτεία*, or inspection. And the ability from what has been learned of leading others to the same theory must be considered as analogous to binding the head and being crowned. But the fifth and most perfect thing is the felicity produced from these, and, according to Platon, an assimilation as much as possible to God."

Such, then, is the utility arising from the proper study of the mathematical sciences.

In the last place, I shall add, for the sake of the liberal reader, the following extract from the Introduction to my translation of Aristoteles' *Metaphysics*. It relates to the contemplative or intellectual energy, the employment of the highest part of our nature:—

Aristoteles denominates the metaphysical science at one time *wisdom*, at another time the *first philosophy*, and at another *theology*, signifying by each of these appellations that it does not rank among those arts and sciences which are conversant with the knowledge of things necessary, or which inquire into things subservient to the advantages and conveniences of the mortal life, but that it is a knowledge and science to be pursued for its own sake, and which speculates the first principles and causes of things; for these are beings in the most eminent degree. Hence, in the sixth book of his *Nicomachean Ethics*, he defines wisdom to be the most accurate of sciences, the science of things most honorable, that is, principles, and the summit of all disciplines. With the multitude, indeed, merged in sense, whatever does not contribute to the good of the merely animal life is considered as a thing of no value; and hence by the better part of them it is regarded with indifference, and by the greater number with contempt. It is vain to talk to such as these of a good purely intellectual, which is independent of chance and fortune, which is desirable for its own sake, and which confers the most pure and permanent felicity on its possessor; for what passion can it gratify? What sense can it charm? Ignorant of the mighty difference between things necessary and such as are eminently good,

they mistake means for ends, pursue the flying mockeries of being,—for such are all sensible natures,—and idly attempt to grasp the phantoms of felicity.

The conceptions of the experimental philosopher who expects to find Truth in the labyrinths of matter are, in this respect, not much more elevated than those of the vulgar. For he is ignorant that Truth is the most splendid of all things, that she is the constant companion of divinity, and proceeds together with him through the universe; that only the shining traces of her feet are conspicuous in *form*, and that in the dark windings of *matter* she left nothing but a most absurd and fleeting resemblance of herself. This delusive phantom, however, the man of modern science ardently explores, unconscious that he is running in profound darkness and infinite perplexity, and that he is hastening after an object which eludes all detection and mocks all pursuit.

It is well said, indeed, by Aristoteles, that wisdom is the science of principles and causes, since he who knows these knows also the effects of which they are the source. Such a one knows particulars so far as they are comprehended in universals, and this knowledge is superior to that which is partial and coördinated to a partial object; for does not everything energize in a becoming manner when it energizes according to its own power and nature? As for instance, does not nature, in conformity to the order of its essence, energize naturally, and intellect intellectually? For, this being admitted, it follows that knowledge subsists according to the nature of that which knows, and not according to the nature of that which is known. Particulars, therefore, when they are beheld enveloped in their causes, are then known in the most excellent manner; and this is the peculiarity of intellectual perception, and resembles, if it be lawful so to speak, the knowledge of Divinity himself. For the most exalted conception we can form of this knowledge is this, that he knows all things in such a manner as is accommodated to his nature, viz.: divisible things indivisibly, things multiplied uniformly, things generated according to an eternal intelligence, and totally whatever is partial. Hence he knows sensibles without possessing sense; and, without being present to things in place, knows them prior to all local presence, and imparts to everything that which everything is capable of receiving. The unstable essence, therefore, of apparent natures is not known by him in an unstable, but in a definite manner; nor does he know that which is subject to all-various mutations dubiously, but in a manner perpetually the same; for, by knowing himself, he knows everything of which he is the cause, possessing a knowledge transcendently more accurate than that which is coördinate to the objects of knowledge. Hence, in order to know sensible natures, he is not indigent of sense, or opinion, or science; for it is himself that produces all these, and that, in the unfathomable depths of the intellection of himself, comprehends an united knowledge of them, according to cause, and in one simplicity of perception.

Wisdom, therefore, considered as a casual knowledge of particulars, resembles the knowledge of Divinity, and consequently is most honorable and most excellent. And hence the wise man, from resembling, must be the friend of Divinity. Beautifully, therefore, is it observed by Aristoteles that "the man who energizes according to intellect, and is mentally disposed in the best manner, is also, it would seem, most dear to Divinity. For if any attention is paid by the gods to human affairs, as it appears there is, it is also reasonable to suppose that they will be delighted with that which is most excellent, and most allied to themselves,—but this is intellect,—and likewise that they will remunerate those who especially love and honor this, as taking care of that which is dear to themselves, and acting rightly and well."

¹ The word *τελετη*, or initiation, says Hermias, in his Commentary on the *Phaedrus*, "was so denominated from rendering the soul perfect. The soul, therefore, was once perfect. But here it is divided, and is not able to energize wholly by itself. But it is necessary to know that *τελετε*, *μυσταις*, and *εποπτεία* (*τελετη*, *μυσταις*, *εποπτεία*) differ from each other. *Τελετε*, therefore, is analogous to that which is preparatory to purifications. But *μυσταις*, which is so called from closing the eyes, is more divine. For to close the eyes in initiation is no longer to receive by sense those divine mysteries, but with the pure soul itself. And *εποπτεία* is to be established in, and become a spectator of, the mysteries."

The contemplative or intellectual energy, indeed, when it is possessed in the highest perfection of which our nature is capable, raises its possessor above the condition of humanity. "For a life according to intellect," says the Stagirite, "is more excellent than that which falls to the lot of man; for he does not thus live so far as he is man, but so far as he contains something divine. And as much as this divine part of him differs from the composite, so much also does this energy differ from that of the other virtues. If, therefore, intellect compared with man is divine, the life also which is according to the intellect will be divine with respect to human life. It is, however, requisite that we should not follow the exhortations of those who say that man should be wise in human, and a mortal in mortal concerns, but we should endeavor as much as possible to immortalize ourselves, and to do everything which may contribute to a life according to our most excellent part. For this, though it is small in bulk, yet far transcends all the other parts in power and dignity." After this he shows that intellect is the true man, from its being that which is most powerful, principal, and excellent in our natures, "so that," says he, "it would be absurd not to choose that which is our proper life, but that which belongs to something different from ourselves."

Ridiculous, therefore, as well as grovelling, are those conceptions which lead men to value knowledge so far only as it contributes to the necessities, the comforts, and the refinements of the merely human life, and partial and unscientific is that definition of virtue which makes its highest energies to be those of morality; for moral virtue is more human, but intellectual more divine. The former is preparatory to felicity; but the latter, when perfect, is accompanied with perfect beatitude. * * * For it may indeed be truly said that he who has not even a knowledge of common things is a brute among men; that he who has an accurate knowledge of human concerns alone is a man among brutes; but that he who knows all that can be known by intellectual energy is a god among men.

Wisely, therefore, does Platon assert that the philosopher ought not to descend below species, and that he should be solely employed in the contemplation of *wholes* and *universals*. For he who descends below these descends into Cimmerian realms, and Hades itself, wanders among spectres devoid of mind, and exposes himself to the danger of beholding the real Gorgon, or the dire face of Matter, and of thus becoming petrified by a satiety of stupid passions.

GENERAL INTRODUCTION TO THE PHILOSOPHY AND WRITINGS OF PLATON.

BY THOMAS TAYLOR.

[Continued.]

Again, if it be necessary to mention the doctrine delivered through the mathematical disciplines, and the discussions of divine concerns from ethical or physical discoveries, of which many may be contemplated in the *Timaios*, many in the dialogue called *Politikos*, and many may be seen scattered in other dialogues; here, likewise, to those who are desirous of knowing divine concerns through images, the method will be apparent. Thus, for instance, the *Politikos* shadows forth the fabrication in the heavens. But the figures of the five elements, delivered in geometrical proportions in the *Timaios*, represent in images the idioms of the gods who preside over the parts of the universe. And the divisions of the essence of the soul in that dialogue shadow forth the total orders of the gods. To this we may also add that Platon composes politics, assimilating them to divine natures,

and adorning them from the whole world and the powers which it contains. All these, therefore, through the similitude of mortal to divine concerns, exhibit to us in images the progressions, orders, and fabrications of the latter. And such are the modes of theologic doctrine employed by Platon.

"For those," says Proklos, "who treat of divine concerns in an indicative manner either speak symbolically and fabulously, or through images; but of those who openly announce their conceptions, some frame their discourses according to science, but others according to inspiration from the gods. And he who desires to signify divine concerns through symbols is Orphic, and, in short, accords with those who write fables concerning the gods. But he who does this through images is Pythagoric. For the mathematical disciplines were invented by the Pythagoreans in order to a reminiscence of divine concerns, at which, through these, as images, they endeavor to arrive. For they refer both number and figures to the gods, according to the testimony of their historians. But the enthusiastic character, or he who is under the influence of divine inspiration, unfolding the truth itself by itself concerning the gods, most perspicuously ranks among the highest initiators. For these do not think proper to unfold the divine orders or their peculiarities to their familiars through certain veils, but announce their powers and their numbers in consequence of being moved by the gods themselves. But the tradition of divine concerns according to science is the illustrious prerogative of the philosophy of Platon; for Platon alone, as it appears to me, of all those who are known to us, has attempted methodically to divide and reduce into order the regular progression of the divine genera, their mutual difference, the common peculiarities of the total orders, and the distributed peculiarities in each."

Again, since Platon employs fables, let us, in the first place, consider whence the ancients were induced to devise fables, and, in the second place, what the difference is between the fables of philosophers and those of poets. In answer to the first question, then, it is necessary to know that the ancients employed fables looking to two things, viz.: nature and our soul. They employed them by looking to nature, and the fabrication of things, as follows:—

Things unapparent are believed from things apparent, and incorporeal natures from bodies; for, seeing the orderly arrangement of bodies, we understand that a certain incorporeal power presides over them; as with respect to the celestial bodies, they have a certain presiding motive power. As we therefore see that our body is moved, but is no longer so after death, we conceive that it was a certain incorporeal power which moved it. Hence, perceiving that we believe things incorporeal and unapparent from things apparent and corporeal, fables came to be adopted that we might come from things apparent to certain unapparent natures; as, for instance, that on hearing of adulteries, bonds, and lacerations of the gods, castrations of heaven, and the like, we may not rest satisfied with the apparent meaning of such like particulars, but may proceed to the unapparent, and investigate the true signification. After this manner, therefore, looking to the nature of things, were fables employed.

But from looking to our souls they originated as follows: While we are children we live according to the phantasy; but the phantastic part is conversant with figures, and types, and things of this kind. That the phantastic part in us, therefore, may be preserved we employ fables, in consequence of this part rejoicing in fables. It may also be said that a fable is nothing else than a false discourse shadowing forth the truth; for a fable is the image of truth. But the soul is the image of the natures prior to herself; and hence the soul very properly rejoices in fables, as an image in an image. As we are therefore from our child-

hood nourished in fables, it is necessary that they should be introduced. And this much for the first problem concerning the origin of the fables.

In the next place, let us consider what the difference is between the fables of philosophers and poets. Each, therefore, has something in which it abounds more than, and something in which it is deficient from, the other. Thus, for instance, the poetic fable abounds in this, that we must not rest satisfied with the apparent meaning, but pass on to the occult truth. For who, indeed, with intellect, would believe in the literal truth of some of the stories about Zeus and Hera? So that the poetic fable abounds in consequence of asserting such things as do not suffer us to stop at the apparent, but lead us to explore the occult truth. But it is defective in this, that it deceives those of a juvenile age. Platon therefore neglects fables of this kind, and banishes Homeros from his Republic; because youth, on hearing such fables, will not be able to distinguish what is allegorical from what is not.

Philosophic fables, on the contrary, do not injure those that go no further than the apparent meaning. Thus, for instance, they assert that there are punishments and rivers under the earth, and if we adhere to the literal meaning of these we shall not be injured. But they are deficient in this, that as their apparent signification does not injure we often content ourselves with this, and do not explore the latent truth. We may also say that philosophic fables look to the energies of the soul. For if we were entirely intellect alone, and had no connection with phantasy, we should not require fables, in consequence of always associating with intellectual natures. If, again, we were entirely irrational, and lived according to the phantasy, and had no other energy than this, it would be requisite that the whole of our life should be fabulous. Since, however, we possess intellect, opinion, and phantasy, demonstrations are given with a view to intellect; and hence Platon says that if you are willing to energize according to intellect, you will have demonstrations bound with adamant chains; if according to opinion, you will have the testimony of renowned persons; and if according to the phantasy, you will have fables by which it is excited — so that from all these you will derive advantage.

Platon, therefore, rejects the more tragical mode of mythologizing of the ancient poets, who thought proper to establish an arcane theology respecting the gods, and on this account devised wanderings, castrations, battles, and lacerations of the gods, and many other such symbols of the truth about divine natures which this theology conceals. This much he rejects, and asserts that it is in every respect most foreign from erudition. But he considers those mythological discoveries about the gods as more persuasive, and more adapted to truth, which assert that a divine nature is the cause of all good, but of no evil, and that it is void of all mutation, comprehending in itself the fountain of truth, but never becoming the cause of any deception to others. For such types of theology Sokrates delivers in the Republic.

All the fables, therefore, of Platon, guarding the truth in concealment, have not even their externally apparent apparatus discordant with our undisciplined and unperverted anticipations of divinity. But they bring with them an image of the mundane composition in which both the apparent beauty is worthy of divinity and a beauty more divine than this is established in the unapparent lives and powers of its causes.

In the next place, that the reader may see whence and from what dialogues principally the theological dogmas of Platon may be collected, I shall present him with the following translation of what Proklos has admirably written on this subject:

"The truth, then, concerning the gods pervades, as I may say, through all the Platonic dialogues, and in all of them conceptions of the first philosophy, venerable, clear, and supernatural, are

disseminated, in some indeed more obscurely, but in others more conspicuously — conceptions which excite those that are in any respect able to participate of them to the immaterial and separate essence of the gods. And, as in each part of the universe, and in nature herself, the demiourgos of all that the world contains established resemblances of the unknown hyparxis of the gods, that all things might be converted to a divine nature, through their alliance with it, in like manner I am of opinion that the divine intellect of Platon weaves conceptions about the gods in all his writings, and leaves nothing deprived of the mention of divinity, that from the whole of them, a reminiscence of wholes may be obtained and imparted to the genuine lovers of divine concerns."

If, however, it be requisite to lay before the reader those dialogues out of many which principally unfold to us the mystic discipline about the divinities, I should not err in ranking among this number the Phaidon and Phaidros, the Banquet and the Philebos, and together with these the Sophistes and Politikos, the Kratylos and the Timaios. For all these are full through the whole of themselves, as I may say, of the divine science of Platon. But I should place in the second rank after these the fable in the Gorgias, and that in the Protagoras; likewise the assertions about the providence of the gods in the Laws, and such things as are delivered about the Fates, or the mother of the Fates, or the circulations of the universe, in the tenth book of the Republic. Again, you may, if you please, place in the third rank those epistles through which we may be able to arrive at the science about divine natures. For in these mention is made of the three kings, and very many other divine dogmas worthy the Platonic theory are delivered. It is necessary, therefore, looking to these, to explore in these each order of the Gods.

Thus from the Philebos we may receive the science respecting the one good and the two first principles of things, together with the triad which is unfolded into light from these. For you will find all these distinctly delivered to us by Platon in that dialogue. But from the Timaios you may obtain the theory about intelligibles, a divine narration about the demiurgic monad, and the full truth about the mundane gods. But from the Phaidros you may acquire a scientific knowledge of all the intelligible and intellectual genera, and of the liberated orders of gods, which are proximately established above the celestial circulations. From the Politikos you may obtain the theory of the fabrication in the heavens of the uneven periods of the universe and of the intellectual causes of those periods. But from the Sophistes, the whole sublunary generation, and the peculiarity of the gods who are allotted the sublunary region and preside over its generations and corruptions. But, with respect to each of the gods, we may obtain many conceptions adapted to sacred concerns from the Banquet, many from the Kratylos, and many from the Phaidon. For in each of these dialogues more or less mention is made of divine names, from which it is easy for those who are exercised in divine concerns to discover by a reasoning process the peculiarities of each.

It is necessary, however, to evince that each of the dogmas accords with Platonic principles, and the mystic traditions of theologians. For all the Grecian theology is the progeny of the mystic tradition of Orpheus; Pythagoras first of all learning from Aglaophemos the orgies of the Gods, but Platon in the second place receiving an all-perfect science of the divinities from the Pythagoric and Orphic writings. For in the Philebos, referring the theory about the two species of principles [bound and infinite] to the Pythagoreans, he calls them men dwelling with the gods, and truly blessed. Philolaos, therefore, the Pythagorean, has left us in writing many admirable conceptions about these

principles, celebrating their common progression into being and their separate fabrication of things. But in the *Timaios*, Platon, endeavoring to teach us about the sublunary gods and their order, flies to theologians, calls them the sons of the gods, and makes them the fathers of the truth about those divinities. And lastly he delivers the orders of the sublunary gods, proceeding from wholes, according to the progression delivered by them of the intellectual kings. Again, in the *Kratylos*, he follows the traditions of theologians respecting the order of the divine progressions. But in the *Gorgias* he adopts the Homeric dogma respecting the triadic hypostasis of the demiurgi. And, in short, he everywhere discourses concerning the gods agreeably to the principles of theologians, rejecting theological fictions, but establishing first hypotheses in common with the authors of fables.

Perhaps, however, some one may here object to us that we do not in a proper manner exhibit the everywhere dispersed theology of Platon, and that we endeavor to heap together different particulars from different dialogues, as if we were studious of collecting together many things into one mixture, instead of deriving them all from one and the same fountain. For if this were the case, we might refer different dogmas to different treatises of Platon, but we shall by no means have a precedaneous doctrine concerning the gods, nor will there be any dialogue which presents us with an all-perfect and entire possession of the divine genera and their coördination with each other. But we shall be similar to those who endeavor to obtain a whole from parts, through the want of a whole prior to parts, and to weave together the perfect from things imperfect; when, on the contrary, the imperfect ought to have the first cause of its generation in the perfect. For the *Timaios*, for instance, will teach us the theory of the intelligible genera, and the *Phaidros* appears to present us with a methodical account of the first intellectual orders. But where will be the coördination of intellectuals to intelligibles? And what will be the generation of second from first natures? In short, after what manner the progression of the divine orders takes place from the one principle of all things, and how, in the generations of the gods, the orders between the one and all-perfect number are filled up, we shall be unable to evince.

Further still, it may be said, where will be the venerableness of your boasted science about divine natures? For it is absurd to call these dogmas, which are collected from many places, Platonic; and which, as you acknowledge, are introduced from foreign names to the philosophy of Platon; nor are you able to evince one whole truth about divine natures. Perhaps, indeed, they will say, certain persons junior to Platon have delivered in their writings, and left to their disciples, one perfect form of the theology. You, therefore, are able to produce one entire theory about nature from the *Timaios*; but from the *Republic*, or *Laws*, the most beautiful dogmas about manners, and which tend to one form of philosophy. Alone, therefore, neglecting the treatise of Platon, which contains all the good of the first philosophy, and which may be called the summit of the whole theory, you will be deprived of the most perfect knowledge of beings, unless you are so much infatuated as to boast on account of fabulous fictions, though an analysis of things of this kind abounds with much of the probable but not of the demonstrative. Besides, things of this kind are only delivered adventitiously in the Platonic dialogues; as the fable in the *Protagoras*, which is inserted for the sake of the politic science and the demonstrations respecting it. In like manner, the fable in the *Republic* is inserted for the sake of justice; but in the *Gorgias*, for the sake of Temperance. For Platon combines fabulous narrations with investigations of ethical dogmas, not for the sake of the fables, but for the sake of the leading design, that we may not only exercise the intellectual part of the soul, through contending reasons, but that

the divine part of the soul may more perfectly receive the knowledge of being, through its sympathy with more mystic concerns. For from other discourses we appear similar to those who are compelled to the reception of truth; but from fables we suffer in an ineffable manner, and call forth our unpervaded conceptions, venerating the mystic information which they contain.

Hence, as it appears to me, *Timaios* with great propriety thinks it fit that we should produce the divine genera, following the inventors of fables as the sons of the gods, and subscribe to their always generating secondary natures from such as are first, though they should speak without demonstration. For this kind of discourse is not demonstrative, but enthusiastic, and was invented by the ancients, not through necessity, but for the sake of persuasion, not regarding mere discipline, but sympathy with things themselves. But if you are willing to speculate not only the causes of fables, but of other theological dogmas, you will find that some of them are scattered in the Platonic dialogues for the sake of the ethical, and others for the sake of physical considerations. For in the *Philebos* Platon discourses concerning bound and the infinite, for the sake of pleasure and a life according to intellect. For I think the latter are species of the former. In the *Timaios* the discourse about the intelligible gods is assumed for the sake of the proposed physiology. On which account it is everywhere necessary that images should be known from paradigms, but that the paradigms of material things should be immaterial, of sensibles intelligible, and that the paradigms of physical forms should be separate.

But again in the *Phaidros* Platon celebrates the supercelestial place, the subcelestial profundity, and every genus under this, for the sake of amatory mania; the manner in which the reminiscence of souls takes place, and the passage to these from hence. But everywhere, as I may say, the leading end is either physical or political, while the conceptions about divine natures take place either for the sake of invention or perfection. How, therefore, can such a theory as yours be any longer venerable and supernatural, and worthy to be studied beyond everything, when it is neither able to evince the whole in itself, nor the perfect, nor that which is precedaneous in the writings of Platon, but is destitute of all these, is violent and not spontaneous, and does not possess a genuine but an adventitious order, as in a drama? And such are the objections that may be urged against our design.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

A DISCOURSE UPON THE MYSTERIES.

BY IAMBlichOS OF CHALKIS, A TOWN OF HOLLOW SYRIA.

TRANSLATED BY ALEXANDER WILDER.

[The Reply of Abammon, the Master, to the Letter of Porphyrios to Anebo, and the Explanation of Objections therein proposed. In Ten Parts.]

PART I.

Hermès, the Divine Patron of Learning.

I. *Hermès*, the patron of learning, in ancient time, was rightly considered to be a god in whom the whole sacerdotal order participated. The one who presides over the true knowledge is one and the same everywhere. Our ancestors dedicated to him their wise discoveries, and named their respective treatises *Books of HERMES*. If we also have a share of the same divinity, attained and possible to us, you do right in proposing your questions concerning divine matters to the priests as friends to be resolved. Accordingly, I, considering the letter sent to my disciple as written virtually to myself, will endeavor to answer you ex-

PLICITLY. It would not be becoming that Pythagoras, Platón, Démokritos, Eudoxos, and many others of the old Greeks should have been able to procure suitable instruction from the Sacred Scribes of their time, when you, our own contemporary, holding sentiments like theirs, are disappointed in your endeavor by those now living and styled Public Teachers.

I therefore undertake the present discourse, and ask of you whether you are willing to consider the matter as though the same person to whom you sent your letter is answering you. But if it seems to you more proper, regard me myself or any other religious teacher of the Egyptians as discoursing with you in these sentences; for this is a matter of no importance. Or, what I consider still better, take no notice of the person who speaks, whether he is inferior or superior, but confine the attention to the things uttered, and stimulate the understanding to discriminate whether truth or falsehood is spoken.

At the outset, let us draw a distinction in the order of subjects, in regard to the quality and kind of problems which have been proposed. Then let us next proceed to set forth the doctrines of theological science which relate to the deities from which the questions are deduced, and establish by proposition the demonstrated facts, according to which they will be examined. Some things which are now badly jumbled together require separating; others relate to the First Cause by which every thing exists and is already understood; others demand the knowledge of both sides, and we shall accordingly present the contrary views. Some things will also demand from us an explanation of the entire Mystic Worship. Such being the case, our answer will be taken from many topics and from different facts of demonstrated knowledge.

Some things embrace sciences derived from what the Wise Men of the Chaldeans have delivered; others comprehend what the spiritual teachers of the Egyptians inculcated; and some, being deduced from the theory of the philosophers, elicit inquiries of an analogous character. There are also certain topics which originate from other opinions not worthy of a word, which give rise to unseemly controversy; and others which take their origin from conceptions common to all men. These matters are therefore, every one of them, variously arranged in regard to each other, and are combined together after many forms; whence, on account of all these things, there will be a certain amount of discussion necessary in order that everything may be properly handled.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

ON THE NECESSITY OF PURIFICATION, AND THE METHOD BY WHICH IT MAY BE OBTAINED.

BY PORPHYRIOS.

[The following sections are extracted from Porphyrios' work on Abstinence. They comprise the most important part of that very valuable and interesting work. The translation is by Thomas Taylor, and was made from the original Greek.]

I. In the first place, therefore, it must be known that my discourse does not bring with it an exhortation to every description of men. For it is not directed to those who are occupied in sordid mechanical arts, nor to those who are engaged in athletic exercises; neither to soldiers, nor sailors, nor rhetoricians, nor to those who lead an active life. But I write to the man who considers what he is, whence he came, and whither he ought to tend, and who, in what pertains to nutriment, and other necessary concerns, is different from those who propose to themselves other kinds of life; for to none but such as these do I direct my

discourse. For, neither in this common life can there be one and the same exhortation to the sleeper, who endeavors to obtain sleep through the whole of life, and who, for this purpose, procures from all places things of a soporiferous nature, as there is to him who is anxious to repel sleep, and to dispose everything about him to a vigilant condition. But to the former it is necessary to recommend intoxication, surfeiting, and satiety, and to exhort him to choose a dark house, and

"A bed luxuriant, broad, and soft,"

as the poets say; and that he should procure for himself all such things as are of a soporiferous nature, and which are effective of sluggishness and oblivion, whether they are odors or ointments, or are liquid or solid medicines. And to the latter it is requisite to advise the use of a drink sober and without wine, food of an attenuated nature, and almost approaching to fasting, a house lucid and participating of a subtle air and wind, and to urge him to be strenuously excited by solicitude and thought, and to prepare for himself a small and hard bed. But, whether we are naturally adapted to this, I mean to a vigilant life, so as to grant as little as possible to sleep, since we do not dwell among those who are perpetually vigilant, or whether we are designed to be in a soporiferous state of existence, is the business of another discussion, and is a subject which requires very extended demonstrations.

II. To the man, however, who once suspects the enchantments attending our journey through the present life, and belonging to the place in which we dwell, who also perceives himself to be naturally vigilant, and considers the somniferous nature of the region he inhabits; — to this man addressing ourselves, we prescribe food consentaneous to his suspicion and knowledge of this terrene abode, and exhort him to suffer the somnolent to be stretched on their beds, dissolved in sleep. For it is requisite to be cautious, lest, as those who look on the bleary-eyed contract an ophthalmia, and as we gape when present with those who are gaping, so we should be filled with drowsiness and sleep when the region which we inhabit is cold and adapted to fill the eyes with rheum, as being of a marshy nature, and drawing down all those that dwell in it to a somniferous and oblivious condition. If, therefore, legislators had ordained laws for cities with a view to a contemplative and intellectual life, it would certainly be requisite to be obedient to those laws, and to comply with what they instituted concerning food. But if they established their laws looking to a life according to nature, and which is said to rank as a medium between the irrational and the intellectual life, and to what the vulgar admit, who conceive externals, and things which pertain to the body, to be good or evil, why should any one, adducing their laws, endeavor to subvert a life which is more excellent than every law which is written and ordained for the multitude, and which is especially conformable to an unwritten and divine law? For such is the truth of the case.

III. The contemplation which procures for us felicity, does not consist, as some one may think it does, in a multitude of disciplines and discussions; nor does it receive any increase by a quantity of words. For if this were the case, nothing would prevent those from being happy by whom all disciplines are collected together and comprehended. Now, however, every discipline by no means gives completion to this contemplation, nor even the disciplines which pertain to truly existing beings, unless there is a conformity to them of our nature and life. For since there are, as it is said, in every purpose three ends, the end with us is to obtain the contemplation of real being, the attainment of it procuring, as much as it is possible for us, a conjunction of the contemplator with the object of contemplation. For the reascend of the soul is not to any thing else than true being itself,

in conjunction with any other thing. But intellect is a lasting being; so that the end is to live according to intellect. Hence, such discussions and exoteric disciplines as impede our purification do not give completion to our felicity. If, therefore, felicity consisted in literary attainments, this end might be obtained by those who pay no attention to their food and their actions. But since for this purpose it is requisite to exchange the life which the multitude lead for another, and to become purified both in words and deeds, let us consider what reasonings and what works will enable us to obtain this end.

IV. Shall we say, therefore, that they will be such as separate us from sensibles, and the passions which pertain to them, and which elevate us as much as possible to an intellectual, unimaginative, and impassive life; but that the contraries to these are foreign, and deserve to be rejected? And this by so much the more as they separate us from a life according to intellect? But I think it must be admitted, that we should follow the object to which intellect attracts us. For we resemble those who enter into, or depart from, a foreign region, not only because we are banished from our intimate associates, but, in consequence of dwelling in a foreign land, we are filled with barbaric passions, and manners, and legal institutes, and to all of these have a great propensity. Hence, he who wishes to return to his proper kindred and associates, should not only with alacrity begin the journey, but, in order that he may be properly received, should meditate how he may divest himself of everything of a foreign nature which he has assumed, and should recall to his memory such things as he has forgotten, and without which he cannot be admitted by his kindred and friends. After the same manner, also, it is necessary, if we intend to return to things which are truly our own, that we should divest ourselves of everything of a mortal nature which we have assumed, together with an adhering affection towards it, and which is the cause of our descent into this terrestrial region; and that we should excite our recollection of that blessed and eternal essence, and should hasten our return to the nature which is without color and without quality, earnestly endeavoring to accomplish two things: one, that we may cast aside everything material and mortal; but the other, that we may properly return and be again conversant with our true kindred, ascending to them in a way contrary to that in which we descended hither. For we were intellectual natures, and we still are essences purified from all sense and irrationality; but we are complicated with sensibles, through our incapability of eternally associating with the intelligible, and through the power of being conversant with the terrestrial concerns. For all the powers which energize in conjunction with sense and body, are injured in consequence of the soul not abiding in the intelligible (just as the earth, when in a bad condition, though it frequently receives the seed of wheat, yet produces nothing but tares); and this is through a certain depravity of the soul which does not, indeed, destroy its essence from the generation of irrationality, but through this is conjoined with a mortal nature, and is drawn down from its own proper to a foreign condition of being.

V. So that, if we are desirous of returning to those natures with which we formerly associated, we must endeavor to the utmost of our power to withdraw ourselves from sense and imagination, and the irrationality with which they are attended, and also from the passions which subsist about them, as far as the necessity of our condition in this life will permit. But such things as pertain to intellect should be distinctly arranged, procuring for it peace and quiet from the war with the irrational part; that we may not only be auditors of intellect and intelligibles, but may as much as possible enjoy the contemplation of them, and, being established in an incorporeal nature, may truly live through intellect, and not falsely in conjunction with things

allied to bodies. We must therefore divest ourselves of our manifold garments, both of this visible and fleshly vestment, and of those with which we are internally clothed, and which are proximate to our cutaneous habiliments; and we must enter the stadium naked and unclothed, striving for the most glorious of all prizes, the Olympia of the soul. The first thing, however, and without which we cannot contend, is to divest ourselves of our garments. But since of these some are external and others internal, thus also, with respect to the denudation, one kind is through things which are apparent, but another through such as are more unapparent. Thus, for instance, not to eat, or not to receive what is offered to us, belongs to things which are immediately obvious; but not to desire is a thing more obscure; so that, together with deeds, we must also withdraw ourselves from an adhering affection and passion towards them. For what benefit shall we derive by abstaining from deeds, when at the same time we tenaciously adhere to the causes from which the deeds proceed?

VI. But this departure from sense, imagination, and irrationality may be effected by violence, and also by persuasion and by reason, through the wasting away, and, as it may be said, oblivion and death of the passions; which, indeed, is the best kind of departure, since it is accomplished without oppressing that from which we are divulsed. For, in sensibles, a divulsion by force is not effected without either a laceration of a part or a vestige of avulsion. But this separation is introduced by a continual negligence of the passions. And this negligence is produced by an abstinence from those sensible perceptions which excite the passions, and by a persevering attention to intelligibles. And among these passions or perturbations, those which arise from food are to be enumerated.

VII. We should therefore abstain, no less than from other things, from certain food, viz., such as is naturally adapted to excite the passive part of our soul, concerning which it will be requisite to consider as follows: There are two fountains whose streams irrigate the bond by which the soul is bound to the body, and from which the soul being filled as with deadly potions, becomes oblivious of the proper objects of her contemplation. These fountains are pleasure and pain; of which sense, indeed, is a preparative, and the perception, which is according to sense, together with the imaginations, opinions, and recollections which accompany the senses. But from these, the passions being excited, and the whole of the irrational nature becoming fattened, the soul is drawn downward, and abandons its proper love of true being. As much as possible, therefore, we must separate ourselves from these. But the separation must be effected by an avoidance of the passions which subsist through the senses and the irrational part. But the senses are employed either on objects of the sight, or of the hearing, or of the taste, or the smell, or the touch; for sense is, as it were, the metropolis of that foreign colony of passions which we contain. Let us, therefore, consider how much fuel of the passions enter into us through each of the senses. For this is effected partly by the view of the contests of horses and the athleteæ, or those whose bodies are contorted in dancing, and partly from the survey of beautiful women. For these, ensnaring the irrational nature, attack and subjugate it by all-various deceptions.

VIII. For the soul, being agitated with Bacchic fury through all these by the irrational part, is made to leap, to exclaim and to vociferate, the external tumult being inflamed by the internal, and which was first enkindled by sense. But the excitations through the ear, and which are of a passive nature, are produced by certain noises and sounds, by indecent language and defamation, so that many, through these being exiled from reason, are furiously agitated, and some, becoming effeminate, exhibit all-

various convolutions of the body. And who is ignorant how much the use of fumigations, and the exhalations of sweet odors, with which lovers supply the objects of their love, fatten the irrational part of the soul? But what occasion is there to speak of the passions produced through the taste? For here, especially, there is a complication of a twofold bond; one which is fattened by the passions excited by the taste; and the other which we render heavy and powerful by the introduction of foreign bodies, *i.e.* of bodies different from our own. For, as a certain physician said, those are not the only poisons which are prepared by the medical art; but those likewise which we daily assume for food, both in what we eat and what we drink, and a thing of a much more deadly nature is imparted to the soul through these, than from the poisons which are compounded for the purpose of destroying the body. And as to the touch, it does all but transmute the soul into the body, and produces in it certain inarticulate sounds, such as frequently take place in inanimate bodies. And of all these, the recollections, imaginations, and opinions, being collected together, excite a swarm of passions, *viz.*: of fear, desire, anger, love, voluptuousness, pain, emulation, solicitude, and disease, and cause the soul to be full of similar perturbations.

IX. Hence, to be purified from all these is most difficult, and requires a great contest, and we must bestow much labor both by night and by day to be liberated from an attention to them, and this because we are necessarily complicated with sense. Whence, also, as much as possible, we should withdraw ourselves from those places in which we may, though unwillingly, meet with this hostile crowd. From experience, also, we should avoid a contest with it, and even a victory over it, and the want of exercise from inexperience.

X. For we learn that this conduct was adopted by some of the celebrated ancient Pythagoreans and wise men; some of whom dwelt in the most solitary places; but others in temples and sacred groves, from which, though they were in cities, all tumult and the multitude were expelled. But Platon chose to reside in the Academy, a place not only solitary and remote from the city, but which was also said to be insalubrious. Others have not spared even their eyes, through a desire of not being divulsed from the inward contemplation of reality. If some one, however, at the same time that he is conversant with men, and while he is filling his senses with the passions pertaining to them, should fancy that he can remain impassive, he is ignorant that he both deceives himself and those who are persuaded by him, nor does he see that we are enslaved to many passions through not alienating ourselves from the multitude. For he did not speak vainly, and in such a way as to falsify the nature of the Coryphæan philosopher, who said of them, "These, therefore, from their youth, neither know the way to the forum, nor where the court of justice or senate-house is situated, or any common place of assembly belonging to the city. They likewise neither hear nor see laws, or decrees, whether orally promulgated or written. And as to the ardent endeavors of their companions to obtain magistracies, the associations of these, their banquets and wanton feasting, accompanied by pipers, these they do not even dream of accomplishing. But whether anything in the city has happened well or ill, or what evil has befallen any one from his progenitors, whether male or female, these are more concealed from such a one than, as it is said, how many measures called choes the sea contains. And besides this, he is even ignorant that he is ignorant¹ of all these particulars. For he does not abstain from them for the sake of renown, but, in reality, his body only dwells and

¹ The multitude are ignorant that they are ignorant with respect to objects of all others the most splendid and real; but the Coryphæan philosopher is ignorant that he is ignorant with respect to objects most unsubstantial and obscure. The former ignorance is the consequence of a defect, but the latter of a transcendence of gnoetic energy.

is conversant in the city; but, his reasoning power considering all these as trifling and of no value, "he is borne away," according to Pindar, "on all sides, and does not apply himself to anything which is near."

XI. In what is here said, Platon asserts that the Coryphæan philosopher, by not at all mingling himself with the above-mentioned particulars, remains impassive to them. Hence, he neither knows the way to the court of justice nor the senate-house, nor anything else which has been before enumerated. He does not say, indeed, that he knows and is conversant with these particulars, and that, being conversant, and filling his senses with them, yet does not know anything about them; but, on the contrary, he says that, abstaining from them, he is ignorant that he is ignorant of them. He also adds that this philosopher does not even dream of betaking himself to banquets. Much less, therefore, would he be indignant if deprived of broth or pieces of flesh; nor, in short, will he admit things of this kind. And will he not rather consider the abstinence from all these as trifling and a thing of no consequence, but the assumption of them to be a thing of great importance and noxious? For since there are two paradigms in the order of things, — one of the divine nature, which is most happy; the other of that which is destitute of divinity, and which is most miserable, — the Coryphæan philosopher will assimilate himself to the one, but will render himself dissimilar to the other, and will lead a life conformable to the paradigm to which he is assimilated, *viz.*: a life satisfied with slender food, and sufficient to itself, and in the smallest degree replete with mortal natures.

XII. Hence, as long as any one is discordant about food, and contends that this or that thing should be eaten, but does not conceive that, if it were possible, we should abstain from all food, assenting by this contention to his passions, such a one forms a vain opinion, as if the subjects of his dissension were things of no consequence. He, therefore, who philosophizes, will not separate himself from his terrestrial bonds by violence; for he who is compelled to do this nevertheless remains there from whence he was forced to depart. Nor must it be thought that he who strengthens these bonds effects a thing of small importance. So that only granting to nature what is necessary, and this of a light quality, and through more slender food, he will reject whatever exceeds this as only contributing to pleasure. For he will be persuaded of the truth of what Platon says, that sense is a nail by which the soul is fastened to bodies, through the agglutination of the passions and the enjoyment of corporeal delight. For if sensible perceptions were no impediment to the pure energy of the soul, why would it be a thing of a dire nature to be in a body, while at the same time the soul remained impassive to the motions of the body?

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

THE ELEMENTS OF THEOLOGY.

BY PROKLOS.

[Translated from the original Greek.]

[This admirable work may be termed a hand-book of the elementary principles of the Platonic Theology. It ought to be carefully read and thoroughly comprehended by all who desire to *rightly* begin the study of this Theology. "It contains two hundred and eleven propositions, disposed in a scientific order, and supported by the firmest demonstrations. They begin from super-essential unity, and proceed gradually through all the beautiful and wonderful progressions of divine causes, ending in the self-moving energies of soul. They possess all the accuracy of Euklides, and all the subtlety and sublimity necessary to a knowledge of the most profound theology, and may be considered as bearing the same relation to the Pythagoric and Platonic wisdom as Euklides' Elements

to the most abstruse geometry. The genuine Platonist who may be ignorant of Greek will, I persuade myself, rejoice to see this invaluable treasure in his native tongue; and those who have been led to consider the theology of the heathens as delusion and absurdity will doubtless be surprised to find that it is replete with the sublimest knowledge and the most important truths." Robert Blakey, writing of Proklos in his "History of the Philosophy of Mind," says: "But his great work of method is his *Elements of Theology*, which he has treated of at great length, and which embodies the chief elements of the Platonic system as defined and illustrated by Proklos and his immediate successors. It is impossible to look over the methodical propositions of this treatise without recognizing it as the prolific parent of many subsequent theories both in theology and philosophy. It is an exceedingly interesting exposition of an ancient system, and treated in a manner the most profound and logical."]

PROPOSITION I.

All multitude participates, in a certain respect, of *the one*.

For if it in no respect participates of *the one*, neither will the whole be one whole, nor each of the many of which the multitude consists; but there will also be a certain multitude arising from each of these, and this will be the case to infinity. Each of these infinities, likewise, will again be infinite multitude. For, participating in no respect of any one, neither according to the whole of itself, nor according to each of the many which it contains, it will be in every respect, and according to the whole, infinite. For each of the many which you may assume will either be one or not one, will either be many or nothing. But if each is nothing, that also which consists of these will be nothing. And if each is many each will consist of infinities infinitely; and this not in capacity, but in energy. These things, however, are impossible. For neither does any being consist of infinities infinitely assumed, since there is not more than the infinite; but that which consists of all is more than each. Nor is it possible for anything to be composed from nothing. All multitude, therefore, participates in a certain respect of *the one*.

PROPOSITION II.

Everything which participates of *the one* is both one and not one.

For if it is not *the one* itself (since it participates of *the one*, being something else besides the one), it suffers or is passive to it according to participation, and sustains to become one. If, therefore, it is nothing besides *the one*, it is one alone, and does not participate of *the one*, but will be *the one* itself. But if it is something besides *the one*, which is not *the one*, but its participant, it is both not one and one, not indeed such a one as the one itself, but *one being*, as participating of *the one*. This, therefore, is not one, nor is it that which *the one* is. But it is one, and at the same time a participant of *the one*. Hence, being of itself not one, it is both one and not one, being something else besides *the one*. And so far indeed as it abounds, it is not one, but so far as it is passive to the one it is one. Everything, therefore, which participates of *the one*, is both one and not one.

PROPOSITION III.

Everything which becomes one, becomes so through the participation of *the one*, and is one, so far as it suffers the participation of *the one*.

For if things which are not one become one, they doubtless become so by a conjunction and communication with each other, and they sustain the presence of *the one*, not being that which *the one* itself is. Hence they participate of *the one* so far as they suffer to become one. For, if they are already one they will not become one; since that which is does not become that which it is already. But if they become one from nothing, i.e., from the privation of *the one*, since a certain one is ingenerated in them, the one itself is prior to them. And this ingenerated one must be derived from *the one* itself. Everything, therefore, which becomes one, becomes so through the participation of *the one*, etc.

PROPOSITION IV.

Everything which is united is different from *the one* itself.

For if it is united it will participate in a certain respect of *the one*, so far as it is said to be united. That, however, which participates of *the one* is both one and not one. But *the one* itself is not both one and not one. For if this were the case, again the one which is in it would have both these, and this would take place to infinity, there being no *one* itself at which it is possible to stop; but everything being one and not one, there will be something united which is different from *the one*. For if *the one* is the same with the united, it will be infinite multitude. And in a similar manner each of the things of which the united consists will be infinite multitude. Everything, therefore, which is united is different from *the one* itself.

PROPOSITION V.

All multitude is secondary to *the one*.

For if multitude is prior to *the one*, *the one* indeed will participate of multitude, but multitude which is prior to *the one* will not participate of *the one*, since that multitude existed prior to the subsistence of *the one*. For it will not participate of that which is not; because that which participates of *the one* is one and at the same time not one; but the one will not yet subsist, that which is first being multitude. It is, however, impossible that there should be a certain multitude, which in no respect whatever participates of *the one*. Multitude, therefore, is not prior to *the one*.

But if multitude subsists simultaneously with *the one*, and they are naturally coördinate with each other, — for nothing of time will prevent them being so, — neither will *the one* of itself be many, nor will multitude be one, as being at one and the same time oppositely divided by nature, if neither is prior or posterior to the other. Hence multitude of itself will not be one, and each of the things that are in it will not be one, and this will be the case to infinity, which is impossible. Multitude, therefore, according to its own nature, participates of *the one*, and it will not be possible to assume anything of it which is not one. For not being one, it will be an infinite consisting of infinities, as has been demonstrated. Hence, it entirely participates of *the one*. If, therefore, *the one*, which is of itself one, in no respect participates of multitude, multitude will be entirely posterior to *the one*; participating indeed of *the one*, but not being participated by it.

But if *the one* also participates of multitude, subsisting indeed as one according to hyparxis but not as one according to participation, *the one* will be multiplied, just as multitude is united on account of *the one*. *The one* therefore will communicate with multitude, and multitude with it. But things which coalesce, and communicate in a certain respect with each other, if, indeed, they are collected together by something else, that something else is prior to them. But if they themselves collect themselves, they are not opposed to each other. For opposites do not hasten to each other. Hence if *the one* and multitude are oppositely divided, and multitude so far as multitude is not one, and *the one* so far as one is not multitude, neither will one of these subsisting in the other be one and at the same time two. If, also, there is something prior to them which collects them, this will either be one or not one. But if it is not one, it will either be many or nothing. It will not, however, be many, lest multitude should be prior to *the one*, nor yet will it be nothing. For how can nothing congregate? It is, therefore, one alone. For this which is the one cannot be many, lest there should be a progression to infinity. It is, therefore, *the one* itself, and all multitude is from *the one* itself.

PROPOSITION VI. — *Concerning unity.*

Every multitude consists either of things united or of unities.

For that each of things many will not be itself multitude alone, and again that each part of this will not be multitude alone, is evident. But if it is not multitude alone, it is either united or unities. And if, indeed, it participates of *the one*, it is united; but if it consists of things of which that which is primarily united consists, it will be unities. For if there is *the one itself* there is also that which primarily participates of it, and which is primarily united. But this consists of unities. For if it consists of things united, again things united consist of certain things, and this will be the case to infinity. It is necessary, however, that what is primarily united should consist of unities. And thus we have discovered what we proposed at first, viz., that every multitude consists either of things united or of unities.

PROPOSITION VII. — *Concerning producing causes and things produced.*

Every thing productive of another is more excellent than the nature of the thing produced.

For it is either more excellent, or less excellent, or equal. Hence that which is produced from this will either also itself possess a power productive of something else, or it will be entirely unproductive. But if it is unproductive, according to this very thing it will be inferior to that by which it was produced. And through its inefficacy it is unequal to its cause, which is prolific, and has the power of producing. But if it also is productive of other things, it either likewise produces that which is equal to itself, and this in a similar manner in all things, and all beings will be equal to each other, and no one thing will be better than another, that which produces always giving subsistence in a consequent series to that which is equal to itself; or it produces that which is unequal to itself, and thus that which is produced will no longer be equal to that which produces it. For it is the province of equal powers to produce equal things. The progeny of these, however, will be unequal to each other, if that which produces, indeed, is equal to the cause prior to itself, but the thing posterior to it is unequal to it. Hence it is not proper that the thing produced should be equal to its producing cause.

Moreover, neither will that which produces ever be less than that which is produced by it. For if it imparts essence to the thing produced, it will also supply it with essential power. But if it is productive of all the power which that posterior to it possesses, it will also be able to produce itself such as that posterior nature is. And if this be the case it will also make itself more powerful. For impotency cannot hinder, productive power being present, nor a defect of will; since all things naturally aspire after good. Hence, if it is able to render another thing more perfect, it will also perfect itself before it perfects that which is posterior to itself. Hence, that which is produced is not equal to nor more excellent than its producing cause. The producing cause, therefore, is in every respect better than the nature of the thing produced.

PROPOSITION VIII. — *Concerning the first good, which is called the good itself.*

That which is primarily good, and which is no other than *the good itself*, is the leader of all things that in any way whatever participate of good.

For if all beings desire good, it is evident that what is primarily good is beyond beings. For if it is identical with any one being, either being and *the good* are the same, and this particular

being will no longer be desirous of good, — since it is *the good*, for the desire for an object is the not having of that which is desired, and is a distinct thing from the object of the desire, — or else the former is distinct from the latter, and the latter from the former. In the former case being will participate of this desire for the good, but in the latter the good itself will have been participated. Wherefore *the good* is a certain good inherent in a certain participant, and after which the participant alone aspires, but is not that which is simply good, and which all beings desire. For this is the common object of desire to all beings. But that which is inherent in a certain thing pertains to that alone which participates of it. Hence, that which is primarily good is nothing else than the good itself. For if you add anything to it you will diminish by the addition the good itself, thereby making it a certain good instead of that which is purely and simply good. For that which is added, not being *the good*, but something other and less than it, will by its own essence diminish *the good*.

PROPOSITION IX. — *On the self-sufficient.*

Everything which is sufficient to itself, either according to essence or according to energy, is more excellent than that which is not sufficient to itself, but has the cause of its perfection suspended from another cause.

For if all beings naturally aspire after good, and one thing supplies well-being from itself but another is indigent of something else, the one indeed will have the cause of good present, but the other separate and apart. By how much the nearer, therefore, the former is to that which supplies the object of desire to the good, by so much the more excellent will it be than that which is indigent of a separate cause and externally receives the perfection of its hyperaxis or its energy. For since that which is sufficient to itself is both similar and diminished, it is more similar to *the good itself* than that which is not self-sufficient. It is diminished indeed through participating of *the good*, and because it is not primarily *the good*. Yet it is in a certain respect allied to it, so far as it is able to possess good from itself. But to participate, and to participate through another, are more remote from that which is primarily good, and which is nothing else than good.

PROPOSITION X.

Everything which is sufficient to itself is inferior to that which is simply good.

For what else is a thing sufficient to itself than that which from itself and in itself possesses good? But this is now full of good, and participates of it, but is not that which is simply good. For that is better than participation and plenitude, as has been demonstrated. If, therefore, that which is sufficient to itself fills itself with good, that from which it fills itself will be more excellent than the self-sufficient, and will be above self-sufficiency. And neither will that which is simply good be indigent of anything. For it does not aspire after anything else, since by aspiring after it would be deficient of good. Nor is that which is simply good sufficient to itself. For thus it would be full of good, and would not be primarily the good.

PROPOSITION XI. — *On cause.*

All beings proceed from one first cause.

For either there is not any cause of beings, or the causes of all finite things are in a circle, or the ascent is to infinity, and one thing is the cause of another, and the presubistence of essence will in no respect stop. If, however, there is no cause of beings, there will neither be an order of things second and first, of things perfecting and perfected, of things adorning and

adorned, of things generating and generated, and of agents and patients, nor will there be any science of beings. For the knowledge of causes is the work of science, and we are then said to know scientifically when we know the causes of things.

But, if causes revolve in a circle, the same things will be prior and posterior, more powerful and more imbecile. For every thing which produces is better than the nature of that which is produced. It makes, however, no difference to conjoin cause to effect, and to produce from cause through many or through fewer media. For cause will be more excellent than all the intermediate natures of which it is the cause. And by how much the more numerous the media by so much greater is the causality of the cause.

And if the addition of causes is to infinity, and there is always again another cause prior to another, there will be no science of any being. For there is not a knowledge of anything infinite. But, causes being unknown, neither will there be a science of the things consequent to the causes. If, therefore, it is necessary that there should be a cause of beings, and causes are distinct from the things caused, and there is not an ascent to infinity, there is a first cause of beings, from which as from a root everything proceeds; some things, indeed, being nearer to, but others more remote from, it. For that it is necessary there should be one principle has been demonstrated: because all multitude subsists posterior to *the one*.

PROPOSITION XII.

The principle and first cause of all beings is *the good*.

For if all things proceed from one cause, as has been above demonstrated, it is requisite to call that cause either *the good* or that which is more excellent than *the good*. But if it is more excellent than *the good*, it must be inquired whether anything is imparted by it to beings and to the nature of beings, or nothing? And if, indeed, nothing is imparted by it, an absurdity will ensue. For we shall no longer preserve it in the order of cause; since it is everywhere requisite that something should be present from cause to things caused, and especially from the first cause from which all things are suspended, and on account of which every being exists. But if something is imparted by it to beings, in the same manner as there is by *the good*, there will be something better than goodness in beings imparted to them by the first cause. For, being more excellent than and above *the good*, it can never bestow on secondary natures anything subordinate to that which is imparted by the nature posterior to itself. But what can be more excellent than goodness? Since we say that the more excellent itself is that which participates of a greater good. Hence, if that which is not good cannot be said to be more excellent than, it must entirely be secondary to, *the good*. If, likewise, all beings aspire after *the good*, how is it any longer possible that there should be something prior to this cause? For if they also aspire after that which is prior to *the good*, how can they especially aspire after *the good*? But if they do not aspire after how is it possible that things which proceed from it should not desire the cause of all? Hence, if it is *the good* from which all beings are suspended, *the good* is the principle and first cause of all things.

PROPOSITION XIII.

Every good has the power of uniting its participants, and every union is good; and *the good* is the same with *the one*.

For if *the good* is preservative of all beings, on which account also it is desirable to all things, but that which is preservative and connective of the essence of everything is *the one*, for all things are preserved by *the one*, and dispersion removes everything from essence—if this be the case, *the good* will cause those things to which it is present to be one, and will connect and con-

tain them according to union. And if *the one* is collective and connective of beings, it will perfect everything by its presence. Hence, therefore, it is good to all things to be united. If, however, union is of itself good, and good has the power of uniting, the simply good and the simply one are the same, uniting and at the same time benefiting beings. Hence it is that those things which after a manner fall off from *the good* are at the same time also deprived of the participation of *the one*. And those things which become destitute of *the one*, being filled with separation, are after the same manner likewise deprived of *the good*. Hence, goodness is union, and union is goodness, and *the one* is that which is primarily good.

PROPOSITION XIV. — On the immovable and self-motive principle or cause.

Every being is either immovable or moved. And if moved, it is either moved by itself or by another. And if, indeed, it is moved by itself, it is self-motive, but if by another it is alter-motive. Everything, therefore, is either immovable, or self-motive, or alter-motive.

For it is necessary, since there are alter-motive natures, that there should also be that which is immovable, and that the self-motive nature should subsist between these. For if every alter-motive thing is moved in consequence of being moved by another thing, motions will either be in a circle, or they will proceed to infinity. But they will neither be in a circle nor have an infinite progression, since all beings are bounded by the principle of things, and that which moves is better than that which is moved. Hence, there will be something immovable which first moves. But if this be the case, it is also necessary that there should be something which is self-motive. For if all things should stop, what will that be which is first moved? It cannot be that which is immovable, for it is not naturally adapted to be moved; nor that which is alter-motive, for that is moved by something else. It remains, therefore, that the self-motive nature is that which is primarily moved. For it is this also which conjoins alter-motive natures to that which is immovable, being in a certain respect a middle, moving, and at the same time being moved. For of these the immovable moves only, but the alter-motive is moved only. Everything, therefore, is either immovable, or self-motive, or alter-motive.

Corollary. — From these things, likewise, it is evident that of things which are moved the self-motive nature is the first; but that of things which move the immovable is the first.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

THE LIFE AND WORKS OF THOMAS TAYLOR THE PLATONIST.

[The Life of Taylor which appeared in "Public Characters of 1799" has been incorporated in this work. It is believed that the facts related in that biography were furnished by Mr. Taylor himself.]

Thomas Taylor the Platonist, unquestionably one of the profoundest philosophers of modern times, descended into this mundane sphere on the fifteenth day of May, in 1758, at London, the metropolis of England. His father was a worthy Dissenting minister, and, like many other ministers, possessed of very limited means. Designing his son for the sacred calling, he sent him at the age of nine years to St. Paul's School to be educated as a Dissenting minister. At this place Thomas Taylor soon gave indications of that contemplative turn of mind and that aversion to merely verbal disquisitions which afterwards became such predominant features in his character. In proof of this it may be mentioned that Mr. Ryder, one of the masters of the

school, whenever a sentence occurred remarkably moral or grave, in any classic which young Taylor was translating to him, would always preface it by saying to the youthful Platonist: "Come, here is something worthy the attention of a philosopher." He remained three years at St. Paul's, but, having become thoroughly disgusted at the manner in which the classical languages were taught, he persuaded his father to take him home and abandon his design of educating him for the ministry. The parent complied indeed, but with great reluctance, as he considered the office of a Dissenting minister the most enviable employment upon earth!

Shortly after he returned home he met a Miss Morton, the oldest daughter of a respectable coal-merchant in Doctor's Commons, with whom he fell deeply in love. This young lady had received an elegant education, and to an agreeable person united uncommon modesty, liberality, and artless manners. Mr. Taylor often declared that he was then as much in love as the most famous hero of romance, and that to see and converse with his adored fair one formed the very summit of his wishes. It appears almost incredible that a boy of twelve should conceive and entertain a sincere and lasting affection for a girl younger even than himself, but in Mr. Taylor's case it was no transient infatuation, as our narrative will show.

During his residence at home, while his father was yet undetermined as to his future situation in life, he happened to meet with Ward's "Young Mathematician's Guide," and was so struck, in looking over the book, with the singularity of *negative quantities*, when multiplied together, producing *positive* ones, that he immediately conceived a strong desire to become acquainted with mathematics. His father, however, who was deeply skilled in modern theology, but utterly unacquainted with this sublime and most useful species of learning, was averse to his son's engaging in such a course of study. Notwithstanding this, Mr. Taylor's ardor soon enabled him to triumph over all opposition, by devoting the hours of rest to mathematical lucubrations, though to accomplish this he was obliged to conceal a tinder-box under his pillow. His taste for the mathematics was further developed and fostered by the study of the works of the celebrated Dr. Isaac Barrow. In his "Dissertation on the Platonic Doctrine of Ideas," he says that he was under extraordinary obligations to Barrow's writings for his proficiency in mathematical learning. In 1773 Mr. Taylor was placed under his uncle, who was one of the officers of the dock-yard at Sheerness. There, during his leisure hours, which were few, he still pursued the study of the speculative part of mathematics; for he was early of opinion that those sciences were degraded when applied to practical affairs, without then knowing that the same view had been entertained by Pythagoras, Platon, Archimedes, and the other celebrated philosophers of antiquity. He also read Bolingbroke and Hume, and by the study of their works was prepossessed in favor of the sceptical philosophy.

The behavior, however, of his uncle was so very tyrannical, and his opportunities for the acquisition were so very inadequate to his thirst for knowledge, that, after he had been condemned to what he considered a state of slavery during three years, he determined to break his fetters, and, as he could find no other refuge from opposition, cast himself at once into the arms of the Church. Accordingly he left Sheerness, and became, for the space of two years, a pupil of the Rev. Mr. Worthington, one of the most celebrated Dissenting preachers. Under the instruction of this gentleman he recovered his knowledge of the rudiments of Latin and Greek, but made no great progress in the attainment of these languages, as his mind, naturally prepossessed to the study of things, required an uncommon stimulus to make it stoop to an attention to words. This stimulus the philosophy of Platon and Aristoteles could alone inspire.

Mr. Taylor during this course of ministerial education renewed with redoubled ardor his acquaintance with Miss Morton, and, what is indeed singular in the extreme, was able to unite in amiable league courtship and study. Hence he applied himself to Greek and Latin in the day, paid his addresses to his fair one in the evening, and had the courage to begin and read through the Latin quarto of Simson's Conic Sections at night.

About the same period Mr. Taylor entered on the study of the modern philosophy, and, thinking himself qualified by his knowledge of the more abstruse parts of mathematics to understand the system of the universe as delivered in the *Principia* of Newton, he began to read that difficult work. We are informed, however, that he soon closed the book with disgust, exclaiming: "Newton is indeed a great mathematician, but no philosopher." He was principally induced to form this conclusion by Sir Isaac's assertion that "every the least possible particle of matter or body attracts all bodies at all distances; that the being, whatever it is, that attracts or impels bodies towards each other, proceeds from those bodies to which it belongs, and penetrates the whole substance of the bodies on which it acts." (Prop. 6, 7, and 8, Lib. 3.) It appeared to him that from this assertion it must inevitably follow that bodies act immediately or by themselves, without the intervention of any other being, in a place where they are not, since attraction is the *immediate* action of attracting bodies; that they thus act in many places at the same time; that they penetrate each other; and that each particle of matter is extended as far as the limits of the universe: all which consequences he considered as plainly absurd.

Thus far the stream of Mr. Taylor's life may be said to have run with an equal tenor, limpid and unruffled, compared with its course in the succeeding period, in which it resembled some dark river rolling with impetuous rage to the main.

The time now drew nigh in which he was to leave his fair one for the university. But as her father, in his absence, intended to marry her to a man of large fortune, who had made her the offer of his hand, Miss Morton, to secure herself from the tyrannical exertion of parental authority, generously consented to unite herself to our philosopher, on condition that the marriage should be a purely formal one, till he had finished his studies at Aberdeen. This he immediately assented to, and the indissoluble contract was made.

But when the Fates are adverse how vain are the most prudent projects! How unfortunate the most generous intentions! The low cunning of Mr. Taylor's mother-in-law discovered the secret, soon after the union of the Platonic pair, who, from a combination of ecclesiastical indignation with parental rage, were for a time exposed to the insult of undeserved reproach and the bitterness of real distress.

We find, however, that they exculpated their parents on this occasion; Mr. Taylor entirely ascribing his father's conduct to the malicious representations of his mother-in-law and the anger of the Church, and Mrs. Taylor to the unnatural and selfish conduct of some of her very near relations.

Such was the distressed situation of the young couple at this period that they had no more than seven shillings a week to subsist on, for nearly a twelvemonth! This was owing to the base artifice of one of Mrs. Taylor's relatives, who was left executor, and who prevailed on her father, then in a dying state, to let him pay her what he had left her as he pleased. Mr. Taylor endeavored, indeed, to obtain employment as an usher to a boarding-school, but it was some time before he was able to effect this, as he was abandoned both by friends and relatives, and could not even borrow ten shillings and sixpence, which was the fee required of successful applicants for such positions.

Finally Mr. Taylor succeeded in obtaining a situation as usher in a school at Paddington. His embarrassments were such that

he could not remove his wife from Camberwell, where she then resided, and as the only time he was permitted to see her was on Saturday afternoon, he enjoyed but little of her company.

Mr. Taylor, however, finding the situation of an usher in itself extremely disagreeable, and, when attended with absence from his partner in calamity, intolerable, determined, if possible, to obtain a less irksome employment; and at last, by the unremitting exertions of his few friends, he procured a clerk's place in Messrs. Lubbock's bank in London. In this position, however, he at first suffered greatly; for as his income was but fifty pounds a year, and this paid quarterly, and as he had no money to spare, and could not remove from Camberwell, he was unable to procure nutriment in the course of the day adequate to the great labors he endured. Hence, he was so exhausted by the time he had reached home in the evening, that he frequently fell senseless on the floor.

At length he managed to rent a house at Walworth, by the assistance of a friend who had been his school-mate; finding a residence at a short distance from London necessary for his own health and that of Mrs. Taylor, and much more favorable to the cultivation of his mind, of which he never lost sight, even amidst the lassitude of bodily weakness, the pain incident to uncommon fatigue, and the immediate pressure of want.

About this time Mr. Taylor's studies were chiefly confined to chemistry. One of his favorite authors was the illustrious Becher, whose *Physica Subterranea* he read with great avidity. He did not, however, neglect mathematics; and, in consequence of having thought much on the quadrature of the circle, and believing he had discovered a method by which the verification of it might be geometrically, though not arithmetically, obtained, he found means to publish, in 1780, a quarto pamphlet on the subject, which was entitled "A New Method of Reasoning in Geometry." Only a small edition of this little work was printed, and it did not attract the attention it really deserved. The substance of it was afterwards given in a note to the first volume of his translation of Proklos on Euklides.

Hitherto Mr. Taylor's studies, considered from the Platonic stand-point, were merely preparatory to those speculations which were to distinguish him in the literary world. Moreover, unknowingly he was led to the mystic discipline of the divine Platon in the exact order prescribed by his disciples; for he began with studying the works of Aristoteles. He was first led to the consideration of Aristoteles' philosophy by the following encomium on the philosopher in Sir Kenelm Digby's treatise "On Bodies and Man's Soul": "As he was the greatest logician and metaphysician and universal scholar, peradventure, that ever lived (and so highly esteemed that the good turn which Sylla did the world in saving his work was thought to recompense his many outrageous cruelties and tyranny), so his name must never be mentioned among scholars but with reverence for his unparalleled worth, and with gratitude for the large stock of knowledge he hath enriched us with." Shortly after he had read Digby he met with a copy of Aristoteles' *Physics*, and before he had perused a page was so enamored with his pregnant brevity, accuracy, and depth, that he resolved to make the study of the Peripatetic Philosophy the great business of his life. Such, indeed, was Mr. Taylor's avidity to accomplish his design that he was soon able to read Aristoteles in the original, and often said that he rather learned Greek through the Greek philosophy than the Greek philosophy through Greek.

However, as he was regularly engaged in the bank till at least seven o'clock in the evening, and sometimes till nine or ten, he was obliged to devote part of the night to study. Hence, for several years, he seldom went to bed before two or three o'clock in the morning; and having, by contemplative habits, learned to

divest himself, during the time which he set apart for study, of all concern about the common affairs of life, his attention was not diverted from Aristoteles either by inconveniences arising from his slender income or solicitude about the business of the day.

With the assistance of Aristoteles' Greek interpreters, Mr. Taylor read and studied the *Physics*, *Metaphysics*, *Morals*, *Logic*, and the books on the Soul, and on the Heaven, of that philosopher; for in his opinion a man might as reasonably expect to understand Archimedes who had never read Euklides, as to comprehend either Aristoteles or Platon, who wrote obscurely from design, without the aid of their Greek commentators. Accordingly he often said that the folly of neglecting the invaluable commentaries of the ancients was only equalled by the arrogance of such as affected to despise them. Mr. Taylor carried his attachment to the commentators so far as to maintain that, owing to the oblivion in which they had been so long concealed, the philosophy of Platon and Aristoteles had not been accurately understood for upwards of a thousand years.

Mr. Taylor, therefore, who, by divesting himself at night of those habits of business which he contracted during the day, may be said in this respect to have resembled Penelope, made it a constant rule to digest what he had learned from Aristoteles while he was walking about with bills. This, when he was once master of his employment, he accomplished with great facility, without either committing mistakes or retarding his business.

After the study of Aristoteles he applied himself to the more sublime speculations of Platon, considering the Peripatetic discipline, when compared with that of Platon, as bearing the relation of the less to the greater mysteries. In this light the two philosophies were always considered by the best of the Platonists. Mr. Taylor had not long entered on the study of Platon before he met with the works of Plotinos, which he read with an insatiable avidity and the most rapturous delight, notwithstanding the obscurity of that author's diction and the profundity of his conceptions. After Plotinos he studied Proklos on the Theology of Platon, a work so very abstruse that he stated that he did not thoroughly understand it until he had thrice perused it. While he was engaged in the study of Proklos, the celebrated Miss Wollstonecraft resided with him nearly three months. He considered her a very modest, sensible, and agreeable young lady. She frequently complimented him on the tranquillity of his manners, and called the little room which he made his study "the abode of peace."

When Mr. Taylor had remained almost six years in the bank, he became disgusted with the servility of the employment, and found his health so much impaired from the combination of severe bodily and mental work that he determined, if possible, to emancipate himself from thralldom, and live by the exertion of his talents. His first effort in this direction was an attempt to construct a perpetual lamp. He exhibited at the Freemasons' Tavern a specimen of phosphoric light; but, the room being small, and very warm from the weather and the number of persons present, the phosphorus caught fire, and this mishap raised a prejudice against the invention which could not be removed. The exhibition, however, procured Mr. Taylor some devoted and influential friends, whose assistance enabled him to relinquish his situation in the bank. He next, at the suggestion of John Flaxman, the eminent sculptor, composed twelve lectures on the Platonic Philosophy, which he delivered at Mr. Flaxman's house, to a highly respectable audience. Among his hearers were Sir William Fordyce, the Hon. Mrs. Damer, Mrs. Cosway, Mr. Romney, Mr. Bennett Langton, etc., etc. Mr. Langton was so much pleased with the lectures, as likewise with the conversation and uncommon application to study of the Platonist, that he at

length mentioned him to the King, under the appellation of a *gigantic reader*. Mr. Langton mentioned him several times, but, though his Majesty expressed his admiration of Mr. Taylor's ardor and perseverance in the pursuit of knowledge, he did not see proper to give him the benefit of any royal patronage. It is to be greatly regretted that the lectures on the Platonic Philosophy were not published, as they doubtless contained a lucid and correct exposition of the philosophic system of Platon the Divine.

About this time Mr. Taylor formed the acquaintance of Mr. William Meredith (one of those who heard him lecture), of Harley Place. This gentleman, in addition to an ample fortune, possessed a most elegant and liberal mind, and, though concerned in a very extensive trade, found leisure for the study of the best English writers and the best English versions of the works of the ancients: He became deeply enamoured with the doctrines of Plato from reading Mr. Floyer Sydenham's translation of some of that philosopher's dialogues, and this fondness for Platon naturally occasioned his attachment to Mr. Taylor.

In 1787, Mr. Taylor became acquainted with the gifted but unfortunate Floyer Sydenham, who died in prison, having been incarcerated for failing to discharge a debt due the keeper of a restaurant. Writing of Sydenham, Mr. Taylor says: "He began the study of Platon, as he himself informed me, when he had considerably passed the meridian of life, and with most unfortunate prejudices against his best disciples, which I attempted to remove during my acquaintance with him, and partly succeeded in the attempt; but infirmity and death prevented its completion. Under such circumstances it was not to be expected that he would fathom the profundity of Platon's conceptions, and arrive at the summit of philosophic attainments." On Sydenham's death, on the 1st of April, 1787, Mr. Taylor composed an eloquent poetical "Panegyric on the Late Dr. Sydenham," which appeared in the *General Advertiser* and most of the evening papers; also in the May number of the *European Magazine*. It was reprinted, with some alterations, in his "Miscellanies in Prose and Verse."

About June of 1787 Mr. Taylor published his translation of the *Mystical Hymns of Orpheus*. He prefixed to it a long and very valuable and interesting introduction, in which he gives much important information concerning the theology of the ancient Greeks. The notes are extensive, and also contain pertinent elucidations and illustrations of many obscure passages. The translation itself is faithful, and truly poetical. In the latter part of the same year (September or October), he gave to the public an excellent paraphrastic version of Plotinos on the Beautiful—one of the most sublime works of that profound philosopher. Mr. Taylor put forth this volume as a "specimen" of a translation of the complete works of Plotinos which he contemplated making. He "desired no other reward of his labor than to have the expenses of printing defrayed, and to see truth propagated in his native tongue." Such noble sentiments are rarely, if ever, entertained or expressed by writers of this degenerate age. The majority of them possess no intellectual independence, but are mere mercenary scribblers whose opinions have a remarkable coincidence with those held by their employers. The next production with which Mr. Taylor delighted the enlightened, and astonished the ignorant, people of his time was a version of the admirable Commentaries of Proklos on Euklides. This work appeared in two quarto volumes, of which the first was published in the spring of 1788, and the second in 1789. These volumes also contain Proklos' Theological Elements, a dissertation on the Platonic doctrine of ideas, the life of Proklos by Marinos, and a History of the Restoration of Platonic Theology by the latter Platonists.

The translator truly says of the Commentaries on Euklides that the "design of the work is to bring us acquainted with the nature and end of mathematics in general, and of Geometry in particular; and in the execution of this design our author has displayed an uncommon elegance of composition and a most valuable store of recondite learning. He is not content with everywhere unfolding the full and accurate meaning of Euklides, but he continually rises in his discourses and leads us into the depths of the Pythagoric and Platonic philosophies."

Of that recondite and invaluable work, the Theological Elements, he says: "I never translated anything which required so much intense thought and severe labor in its execution. This, indeed, must necessarily be the case if the abstruseness of the subject, the difficulty of finding proper terms, and the defects of the original are properly considered." The Life of Proklos by Marinos is very interesting, and has much valuable information respecting one of the greatest disciples of Plato. The History of the Restoration of the Platonic Philosophy is written in a forcible and vivid style, and faithfully portrays how the ancient theology "rose in majesty as Rome declined in power, and appeared in full perfection, invested with celestial honors and surrounded with a god-like band of philosophic heroes, while that mighty empire was diminishing in bulk, and on every side nodding to its dissolution." The Dissertation on the Platonic Doctrine of Ideas shows much original research and thought, and contains a complete refutation of the materialistic system of Locke. In a note to the Life of Proklos Mr. Taylor makes the following avowal of his belief in Philosophic Polytheism: "A genuine modern will doubtless consider the whole of Proklos' religious conduct as ridiculous superstitions, and so indeed at first sight it appears; but he who has penetrated the depth of ancient wisdom will find in it more than meets the vulgar ear. The religion of the heathen has indeed for many centuries been the object of ridicule and contempt; yet the author of the present work is not ashamed to own that he is a perfect convert to it in every particular, so far as it was understood and illustrated by the Pythagoric and Platonic philosophers. Indeed, the theology of the ancients, as well as of the modern vulgar, was no doubt full of absurdity, but that of the ancient philosophers appears to be worthy of the highest commendations and the most assiduous cultivation." This avowal produced a perfect storm of ridicule and denunciation from the press hirelings, bigots, and empty-pated scribblers of that age. From that time until his death Mr. Taylor was the regular target of the irrational attacks and imbecile criticisms of these individuals. But neither their malicious defamations nor stupid criticisms affected Mr. Taylor. As a rule he ignored their existence; occasionally he exposed their malevolence and brutal ignorance. A true philosopher, Mr. Taylor cared naught for public opinion, and it mattered not to him that his work received the general disapprobation of both the learned and the rabble. He eloquently says: "My views have been liberal in the publication, and my mental advantages considerable from the study of ancient philosophy. Amidst the various storms of a life distinguished by outrage and disease it has been a never-failing support and an inviolable retreat. It has smoothed the brow of care and dispelled the gloom of despondence; sweetened the bitterness of grief, and lulled agony to rest. After reaping such valuable advantages from its acquisition I am already rewarded though my labors should be unnoticed by the present and future generation. The lyre of true philosophy is no less tuneful in the desert than in the city; and he who knows how to call forth its latent harmony in solitude will not want the testimony of the multitude to convince him that its melody is ecstatic and divine."

[TO BE CONTINUED.]